

**NOTES**  
**City of San Jose Crime Prevention Program Community Meeting**  
**January 7, 2016**  
**Blanca Alvarado Middle School**  
**1601 Cunningham Ave., San Jose, 95122**

**Background**

Twenty-five community members attended this meeting, including property owners and managers, tenants, and advocates. The meeting format consisted of a slide presentation on the Crime Free Program followed large group Questions and Answers. Community members then broke into two small groups, one was in Spanish and the other in English (a Vietnamese language group was available but not needed). In the small groups, community members were asked to discuss their concerns about crime and safety in and around their apartment buildings, offer suggestions for preventing crime and enhancing safety, and to share their reactions to the Crime Free Program. Participants were also invited to share their written comments and questions on comment cards.

**Q & A following presentation of the Crime Free Program**

Q: I am concerned that the landlord does not need a conviction to evict a tenant. Is that really the case, that you can be evicted if charged but not convicted?

A: Yes, that's the way it is currently set up.

Q: Who will pay for this, for the person to be relocated?

A: We don't know at this time because the Program has not been adopted so not financing or budget decisions have been made.

Comment (not question): There is a lot of bias within the court system as it is and this program will make it worse.

Q: If you put out innocent people, what will you do to make them whole again? Who will cover those that are displaced?

A: We don't know what the budget is for the Program or how it will be paid for.

Comment (not question): This is racially motivated. every community that this program is in, has been displacing communities of color.

Comment (not question): The City should put in after school programs and community programs instead of Crime Free – it's a better way to keep kids out of trouble.

Q: Is the city going to pay for this program?

A: We don't know what the budget is for the Program or who will pay for it.

Comment (not question): There is a lot of concern around the lease addendum.

## **Small Group Discussions**

### ***Spanish Language Group***

#### Concerns with Crime and Safety

- There have been five stolen vehicles within the past two months
- Dark streets because of the trees
- No space to park on Miami drive and Florida avenue
- Drug use in cars on street
- Drug use in carports
- Illegal dumping
- Hubbard school, homeless sleeping around school
- Vehicle dumping (abandoned cars)
- Scotty street and Midfield avenue have pot holes
- Graffiti and vandalism
- Drive-bys

#### Suggestions for Preventing Crime/Enhancing Safety

- More security hired by management will reduce criminal activity
- Cut trees, so not so dark
- Remove sick trees and put in new ones
- More police patrol
- More lights
- Develop a just cause program "Causa Justa"
- Crime prevention that works with residents, not landlords
- A community Center
- Free Programs for kids
- After school programs for kids
- Assist people who have committed crimes to re-enter society
- More permit parking

#### Reactions to the Crime Free Program

- Nobody in the group likes the program. The reasons given:
  - It gives too much power to landlords
  - People will suffer after they get out of jail
  - People will be evicted innocently
  - It benefits the landlords
  - Everyone has rights
  - It takes advantage of the lower class
  - Council has vested interest
  - It penalizes people after they go to jail; eviction is reward
  - It goes after criminal people
  - It will create more homeless people
  - Poco Way didn't work; it still has drugs and gangs
  - People can be evicted without this program or law

- There will be a permanent record of eviction

### ***English Language Group***

#### Concerns with Crime and Safety

- Boys loitering on property during day, near the stairs in front and near the play ground; some live there
- Tenants being unfairly evicted
- Laundry facilities are not secured; damage to doors; people steal money; hang out, and don't work
- People dump furniture; park in others' spots
- Loitering in playground because it's dark
- There is not enough lighting - promotes loitering
- Gates remain open all day
- Domestic violence issues - the laws not understood by management
- Medical marijuana can be perceived as drug abuse
- Cultural misunderstandings
- Gang awareness
- Illegal dumping sometimes blocks access to buildings, etc.
- Parking in other's spots - I called management and nothing gets done
- People are unaware of cultural practices, creates a lot of biases/misunderstandings

#### Suggestions for Preventing Crime/Enhancing Safety

- Repair/enhance lighting, especially in hallways
- Management should hold residents accountable for their lease
- Management should engage with residents
- More Code enforcement
- Cameras
- Educate and train management about domestic violence laws and tenants
- Need cultural education
- Community events bring people together; they build relationships/cultural awareness
- Resources brought to tenants
- Need more cops monitoring gang activity
- Education around medical marijuana

#### Reactions to the Crime Free Program

##### Likes:

- CPTED, having regular inspections
- Training for management
- Higher level of tenant accountability
- Higher level of accountability for everyone
- The partnership with the police and access to information on tenant's criminal activity

Dislikes/concerns:

- Don't want the responsibility to be on the tenants to regulate illegal activity
- Program will hurt more people than help
- Wording on lease addendum is too broad]
- Management would get information about criminal activity of tenants
- What happens if the manager or landlord gets arrested?
- How often will property be inspected?
- Code enforcement not adequate
- CPTED
- Program may not be enforced
- Need an independent appeals process
- Should be based on a conviction not an arrest
- Lets focus on prevention
- Great concern from multiple people on eviction without conviction
- Domestic violence, hold the responsible party accountable (don't evict victims)
- DV laws are often not fully understood by the apartment mongers – concern this program will exacerbate the problem
- Management has too much control
- Concern for inconsistency in how this will be enforced and if its equitable
- It is going to hurt the people it was supposed to protect; like in the Eastside, they will be affected more. Already highly policed on the Eastside, then if someone gets arrested, the whole family is at risk of being evicted
- Concern for lease addendum: bullet two is too broad (“criminal street gang activity” there is no penal code for this)
- Who hold management accountable?

**Comment Card Response**

“Thank you for encouraging me to be apart of my community. I will encourage others to speak out. I have seen in the past things improve and communities come together and hope to see this continue. Thank you for helping and putting time and effort into our community.”